My week as an Anna

Sarah Dawkins was the 2020 SSTUWA participant in the Anna Stewart Memorial Project. She shares her experiences below.

The Anna Stewart Memorial Project is so much more than a usual professional development course. I had an inspiring and moving week with a circle of women I admired and learnt so much from.

It became very apparent to me that gender equality is part of a broader context of equity and that it is not just for feminists.

It is about any minority group or vulnerable group having an equal playing field in the workplace and in being valued by society at large.

I met leaders in all industries, including a minister and multiple union leaders and activists.

I attended a rally that got a bill passed the next night for industrial manslaughter. I toured Parliament House and marvelled at the artworks on display from around Western Australia.

I particularly admired the Indigenous artwork in the rooms and corridors. I went out and met women holding important positions making differences everywhere.

A favourite was visiting Brentwood Primary School and meeting with principal Donna Bridge (pictured right with Sarah), whose school atmosphere was tangibly positive, creative and had visible evidence of students having a strong sense of identity and belonging.

The whole week was full of good surprises and networking with such interesting women, who were really making great strides in varied fields, including Indigenous cultural awareness programs and male-dominated industries.

It was also a great opportunity to meet all the SSTUWA staff members and see all the great work going on behind the scenes.

This program impacted on me in a profound way and I found new courage and confidence to tackle new goals and encourage those around me to do the same.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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